



全人教育英语专业本科教材系列  
ENGLISH TEXTBOOK SERIES FOR HOLISTIC EDUCATION

总顾问 | 仲伟合 刘润清  
总主编 | 文 旭

# ADVANCED ENGLISH (BOOK II)

## 高级英语 第二册

主 编 | 杜世洪 申劲松



 中国人民大学出版社



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# 总序

教育作为一种社会现象，自人类社会产生之日起就出现了。在人类社会的发展过程中，人类积累了经验和知识，这些经验和知识传递给下一代的活动就是教育的雏形。随着人类知识和经验的不断增加，教育活动也不断发展和完善，逐渐成为一种组织严密、培养人的正规社会活动。教育的重要性是无与伦比的，之所谓“建国君民，教学为先”就是这个道理。今天几乎没有人会否认迪斯累里（Disraeli）在 1874 年所说的话：“一个国家的命运取决于这个国家的人民的教育。”外语教育作为教育的一个重要组成部分，在人类的教育中扮演着十分重要的角色。外语教育如何在我国的教育中发挥自己的作用，这是我们所有外语学人必须关注的问题。我国的外语教育有一百多年的历史，取得了辉煌的成就，但如何进一步提升外语教育的质量，这是当今外语教育的核心问题，也是外语教育的一个永恒主题。英语专业教育如何提升自己的质量，到底希望培养什么样的学生，怎样才能实现这些希望，这是我们英语专业教师必须思考的问题，也是英语专业教育的核心问题。把英语作为专业外语来学习，这是时代的需求，既是个人的需要，更是国家语言战略规划的需要。

《国家中长期教育改革和发展规划纲要（2010—2020 年）》明确指出，要“适应国家经济社会对外开放的要求，培养大批具有国际视野、通晓国际规则、能够参与国际事务和国际竞争的国际化人才”。要培养既通晓相关专业又熟练掌握外语的优秀人才，我国的外语教育责无旁贷。英语专业是我国高等教育的重要组成部分，其专业化、特色化非常明显。我们组织编写这套“全人教育英语专业本科教材系列”，其目的就是为了彰显英语专业教育的特色，满足我国英语专业教育的多元需要。在编写之前，我们研究了多种国内外现行的英语专业教科书，咨询资深专家学者，进行了充分的调研和需求分析，确定了本套教材的编写理念和编写方案，最终本套教材才得以与广大师生见面。

## 一、编写依据

### 1. 政策依据

“全人教育英语专业本科教材系列”编写的政策依据是《国家中长期教育改革和发展规划纲要（2010—2020 年）》、《教育部关于全面提高高等教育质量的若干意见》（教高【2012】4 号）以及即



将颁布的《英语类专业本科教学质量国家标准》(讨论稿)。在编写过程中我们充分考虑到新常态下我国英语专业教育的现状,并力求体现当代英语专业教育的本质、特征、目标和任务,贯彻为实现目标所倡导的外语教育理念、教学原则、教学模式、教学过程、教学方法和教学评价,着力服务并促进我国英语专业教育改革,提升英语专业教育的质量,更好地提高英语专业学生的英语水平、跨文化交际能力和综合素质,促进学生的全面发展。

### 2. 理论依据

本套教材编写的理论依据主要是教育学、心理学、语言学、认知神经科学等学科的理论 and 原则。其教育学依据主要是“全人教育理论”(holistic education),主张“教单科、育全人”的外语教育理念;其心理学依据主要是多元智能理论,强调英语学习的特殊性,把听、说、读、写、译等基本技能与学生的多元智能有机地结合起来;其语言学依据主要是应用语言学和教育语言学,尤其是终身学习理论下的体验学习、自主学习与合作学习;其认知神经科学依据主要是全脑教育,认知神经科学有助于我们理解人脑的共同之处与个体差异,有助于英语教学的因材施教,人脑具有可塑性,只要学生拥有信心、自尊和动机,外语学习随时都可以成功。

### 3. 实践依据

本套教材的编写是在广泛调研的基础上进行的。针对我国英语专业学生的英语水平和学习情况,并参照英汉语言文化的差异,系统地培养和提高学生的语言意识和文化意识,提高他们的英语水平、跨文化交际能力和国际视野。我们在编写前对国内多所院校的英语专业教学的实际情况进行了需求分析,与专家学者、教师、学生开展了广泛的交流,同时也吸收了国内外同类优质教材的宝贵经验以及英语专业教材编写的经验。此外,本套教材的编写还认真参考了《义务教育英语课程标准》(2011年版)和《高中英语新课程标准》,充分考虑了英语专业教学与中学英语的合理衔接,内容编排也考虑了大学生的认知和情感特点。

## 二、教材特色

记不清楚是谁说过这样一句话:“教育是民族的根本;教科书是教育的根本。”由此可见教科书的重要性。现代社会教科书在学校教育中的地位是双重的:一方面,互联网时代学生获得信息的渠道快捷而方便,慕课(MOOC)、私播课(SPOC)等也冲击着高校课堂,传统教科书的权威性已受到极大的挑战;另一方面,教科书仍然是课程的中心和学校教育的重要载体,教科书的地位同时得到教育主管部门和教师的强化。当今我国英语专业教育改革的不断深化,给教科书的内容、使用和外环境都带来了很多变化。教科书要与时俱进,编写新教材就势在必行。

“全人教育英语专业本科教材系列”正是在上述背景下应运而生的。本套教材以《英语类专业本科教学质量国家标准》(讨论稿)为指导,以教育学、心理学、语言学、学习科学、认知神经科学等学科为理论依据,以培养学生的英语应用能力及跨文化交际能力为核心,以促进学生的全面发展为目标,针对我国英语专业教学的现状以及学生的心理、生理和认知特点,主要突出以下特色:



### 1. 倡导“教单科、育全人”的全人教育理念

《全人教育英语专业本科教材系列》编写的主要理念是“教单科、育全人”的全人教育，即以“终身学习和终身发展”的育人、发展人、提高人的综合素质为核心的教育模式。这一模式体现了人本主义的基本思想：学习就是成为一个和谐而完善的人。也就是要把学生培养成为有道德、有知识、有能力、和谐发展的“完人”。我们虽然教的是英语专业，注重学生的基本知识和基本技能，但培育的是一个完整的人。所以，在英语专业教学中绝不能忽视对人的培养，要帮助学生树立正确的人生观、价值观和世界观，教育学生认知、认同和践行社会主义核心价值观。联合国教科文组织和国际教育发展委员会编著的《学会生存——教育世界的今天和明天》中就特别强调要“培养完人”（2009：192），“把一个人在体力、智力、情绪、伦理各方面的因素综合起来，使他成为一个完善的人，这就是对教育基本目的的一个广义的界说”（2009：195）。

### 2. 围绕“教育的四大支柱”，突显体验学习和自主学习

全人教育特别重视人生的经验和体验学习。本套教材的编写始终围绕四种基本的学习能力进行安排，即教育的四大支柱：学会认知（learning to know）、学会做事（learning to do）、学会共同生活（learning to live together）以及学会生存（learning to be）。教材的编写始终把语言知识、语言技能、学习能力和学习策略等融入教材内容中，通过任务、活动及练习的设置引导学生体验学习和自主学习；通过“体验”、“模仿”、“合作”等学习方式，丰富学生的百科知识，提高他们的英语应用能力和自主学习能力。

### 3. 强调批判性思维能力的培养

本套教材秉承一个重要的主张，即教育的真正目的就是让人不断地提出问题和思索问题。据说，美国天赋教育的“童子功”入门第一招就是培养学生的批判性阅读行为，第二招就是培养批判性聆听技巧。而批判性思维能力的培养成了各个高校课程设计围绕的核心。培养学生的批判性思维能力，这是全人教育的重要主张之一。本套教材非常注重培养学生的批判性思维能力和创新思维能力，在教材设计的任务、活动和练习中，引导学生对问题进行批判性思考，展示自身作为读者或参与者的理解和评价，提出问题、分析问题和解决问题。

### 4. 强调英语的工具性与人文性的结合

学校教育的最终目标就是发展学生的能力。本套教材的编写充分注重工具性和人文性的结合。除了帮助学生掌握英语这一交流工具外，即提高学生英语听、说、读、写、译的能力以及跨文化交际能力，还特别强调英语教育的人文性，把以人为本、弘扬人的价值作为英语专业教育的另一核心，注重学生的综合素质培养和全面发展。在教材中我们充分挖掘英语专业课程丰富的人文内涵，把社会主义核心价值观有机地融入各类教材中，在潜移默化中培育和教育学生。

### 5. 体现实用性与趣味性的有机统一

本套教材在内容的选择、练习的设计等方面都体现了时代的特点和要求，遵循我国英语专业大学生的情感因素和认知特点，重视学生的兴趣和需求以激发他们的求知欲望，让他们变“要我学”



为“我要学”，从而使他们在主动学习丰富多彩的教材内容的过程中提升英语水平和综合素质。各类教材题材丰富，内容生动有趣，语言地道，文笔优美，体现了趣味性和实用性的有机统一。

#### 6. 融中西文化为一体，注重培养国际化视野

斯宾塞有一个著名的问题：什么知识最有价值？这一问题的背后实际上蕴含着这样的核心问题：谁的知识最有价值？用谁的文化去教育学生？在这些问题上，教科书起到很重要的作用。因此，本套教材特别注重培养学生对中国传统文化的认知与意识，注重培养和提高学生使用英语介绍中国文化的能力。教材融入中西文化，在选材方面重视本土问题和国际问题、中西对比等问题，帮助学生了解国际惯例、规则和形势。既培养学生的跨文化意识，又提升其跨文化交际能力，同时培养其国际化视野。

### 三、编写团队

本套教材的编写有一个强大的团队。顾问为我国著名外语教育专家、北京外国语大学博士生导师刘润清教授，以及广东外语外贸大学博士生导师仲伟合教授，总主编为西南大学博士生导师文旭教授，参加编写的主要学校有西南大学、北京理工大学、东北大学、内蒙古大学、河南大学、贵州大学、上海海事大学、西南政法大学、山西大学、广州大学、湖南科技大学、华南师范大学、陕西师范大学、西北师范大学、四川师范大学、贵州师范大学、云南师范大学、广西师范大学、海南师范大学、西华师范大学、重庆交通大学、重庆理工大学、重庆邮电大学、浙江理工大学、沈阳工业大学、西南石油大学、新疆师范大学、青海师范大学、北京信息科技大学、长江师范学院、中国海洋大学、中国石油大学、济南大学等多所高校的英语专业教师，他们长期从事英语专业教学工作，具有丰富的英语教学经验和教材编写经验，确保了教材的水平和质量。

本套教材的编写凝聚了许多专家学者和教师的经验和智慧，从内容到形式都有不少新的尝试与探索。在此，对为本套教材的编写和出版付出辛勤劳动的所有专家、老师表示衷心的感谢。对于共同研发并出版此套教材的中国人民大学出版社外语分社表示衷心感谢。诚然，由于时间仓促、水平有限，不足之处在所难免。我们会虚心听取大家的意见和批评，并在未来的教学中使之日臻完善。

全人教育英语专业本科教材系列编委会

2015年5月



# 前言

## Preface

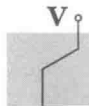
《高级英语》(第1-4册)属于“全人教育英语专业本科教材系列”中针对高年级学生英语学习的精读课专用教材。本教程以《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》和《高校英语专业八级考试大纲》为准绳,以英语专业高年级的培养目标和教学原则为指导,本着“以社会为本”和“以人为本”的全人教育观点,强调学生的“全人学习(holistic learning)”,充分体现了新时期全人教育理念。

《高级英语》各册教材的编写均围绕全人教育理念而进行设计和选材,集中体现了全人教育的思想与目标。在全人教育理念下,高级英语教学的思想目标主要体现于“四个帮助”:第一,帮助学生实现从直觉性思维到分析性思维的飞跃,从接受性思维到批判性思维的飞跃;第二,帮助学生发展见微知类、见类知故、见故知理、见理知新的能力;第三,帮助学生实现智力、心灵、情感、社交与审美等全面健康发展;第四,帮助学生正确认识自我、全面了解社会、深刻理解自然、不断探索奥秘、和谐处理关系、有效促进创新。

在全人教育理念下,高级英语教学的实践目标在于帮助学生进行英语交流时能够做到语法正确、逻辑合理和修辞精美,即在这三个层面日臻完善,从而完成高级英语学习中的“四化”:常用词汇的灵活化、语法结构的牢固化、概念知识的体系化、语篇鉴赏的能力化。换言之,高级英语学习要做到进一步积累语言和吸收知识,要努力拓宽视野,要完善知识结构,力求达到自然、准确、精要乃至新颖的“自由表达”这一外语学习的最高境界。

全人教育理念下的高级英语教学核心实质是通过经典文章的教学来培育学生的批判精神,帮助学生凝练出符合批判性思维的提问技巧。理查德(Paul W. Richard)认为,批判性思维具有层次性(记忆、理解、应用、分析、评价和创新),因而,高级英语教学旨在培养学生不仅善于提出而且善于回答属于批判性阅读思维的六类问题,即澄清或说明自己观点的问题(Questions for clarification)、探讨关于假设的问题(Questions that probe assumptions)、挖掘原因和证据的问题(Questions that probe reasons and evidence)、探讨观点和角度的问题(Questions about viewpoints and perspectives)、探讨启示和结果的问题(Questions that probe implications and consequences)以及关于问题的问题(Questions about the question)。

《高级英语》教材根据以上全人教育理念编写而成,因此,使用本套教材的教学双方应该在上







述理念指导下,设计教学方案,落实教学措施,共同完成教学任务。

《高级英语》教材的编写具有以下特点:

1. 内在主题丰富:各册选材按照全人教育的“认识自我(Self)、了解宇宙(Universe)、洞察自然(Nature)、掌握人脉(Human relations)”这四大范畴来选取经典文章,充分体现全人教育的内在主题,包括精神培育(Spiritual development)、智力提升(Intellectual development)、情感疏导(Emotional development)、体能发展(Physical development)、美学修养(Aesthetic development)、社交拓展(Social development)等。

2. 外在主题多样:全套教材在题材上涵盖社会、哲学、历史、教育、文学、语言、科技、政治、情感、人与自然、经济、国学等领域的主题。

3. 体裁全面:每册都包括记叙文(narration)、描述文(description)、说明文(exposition)和议论文(argumentation)四大体裁及其多种变体。

4. 课文具有难度层次之分:原则上,每册书代表一个难度层次,但同时考虑到学生本身的层次差别,每册书都设有难易程度不同的单元,便于任课教师选用。另外,每册各设10个单元,每单元设正课文和副课文各1篇,即Text A和Text B。Text A的正文前设有简短的文首提示(Headnotes),包括作者简介和课文简介两部分以及关于课文要点的3-5个问题。Text A正文后设置有文末注释(Endnotes)、重要词汇(Important Words and Expressions)和练习(Exercises)。文末注释(Endnotes)属于百科知识注解;练习题型包括:词汇练习题、常识选择题、实用改错题、课文内容相关写作题、文章的艺术特点及主旨思考题。Text B只设作者简介和课文概要,不设要点提问;其后只设阅读思考题,以便学生集中关注课文核心内容。

5. 全套教材的课文内容具有思想性、批判性、现实性、启迪性,兼顾趣味性。

《高级英语》教材的编写并非一朝一夕之事,而是多所高校高年级英语教学队伍长期智慧的结晶。编写者们长期工作在英语专业高级英语教学的第一线,深知社会责任,顺应时代脉搏,理解学生需求,在贯彻全人教育方针的实践中,总结经验,积极探索,推出了这套教材,力争为我国英语教育事业人才培养做出微薄贡献。

怀疑是批判的开始,批判是创新的动力,创新是进步的标志。本套教材肯定存在一些问题,为此,全体编写者恳请使用本套教材的广大师生勇于怀疑、敢于批判,力争创新、共同进步。

本教材配有教师用书,请联系 [huangt@crup.com](mailto:huangt@crup.com), [wyfmail@163.com](mailto:wfyfmail@163.com), 或致电 010-62512737、010-62515037 索取。

全人教育英语专业本科教材系列

《高级英语》编写组

2016年1月

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# One

## Unit 1

### Text A

#### Future Shlock

Neil Postman

#### About the author

*Neil Postman (1931~2003) was an American critic and educator. Postman received his B.S. from the State University of New York at Fredonia and his M.A. and Ed.D. from Columbia University. He was the Paulette Goddard Chair of Media Ecology at New York University and chair of the Department of Culture and Communication. His pedagogical and scholarly interests included media and education, as can be seen in many of his seventeen books, including Amusing Ourselves to Death (1985), Conscientious Objections (1988), Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology (1992), and End of Education (1995). Postman died in 2003 of lung cancer.*

#### About the text

*This text, "Future Shlock", is taken from Neil Postman's book Conscientious Objections: Stirring up Trouble about Language, Technology and Education (1988). Postman uses a string of examples to illustrate the dangers of eroding intelligence in a society hooked on entertainment. He mentions in particular the danger of show business, which presents everything as entertainment. While you are reading this essay, try to keep in mind Postman's viewpoint that "we will become a people amused into stupidity".*

### Questions for comprehension

1. What do you think is Postman's purpose in "Future Shock"?
2. What is the main point in *The Gods Must Be Crazy* example?
3. Does Postman's view of human intelligence coincide with yours?
4. Whom do you think Postman had in mind as his readers?
5. In this piece of exemplification, how are different types of examples put to different uses?

① Human intelligence is among the most fragile things in nature. It doesn't take much to distract it, suppress it, or even annihilate it. In this century, we have had some lethal examples of how easily and quickly intelligence can be defeated by any one of its several **nemeses**: ignorance, superstition, moral fervor, cruelty, cowardice, neglect. In the late 1920s, for example, Germany was, by any measure, the most literate, cultured nation in the world. Its legendary seats of learning attracted scholars from every corner. Its philosophers, social critics, and scientists were of the first rank; its humane traditions were an inspiration to less favored nations. But by the mid-1930s—that is, in less than ten years—this cathedral of human reason had been transformed into a **cesspool** of barbaric irrationality. Many of the most intelligent products of German culture were forced to flee—for example, Einstein, Freud, Karl Jaspers, Thomas Mann, and Stefan Zweig. Even worse, those who remained were either forced to submit their minds to the sovereignty of primitive superstition, or—worse still—willingly did so: Konrad Lorenz, Werner Heisenberg, Martin Heidegger, Gerhardt Hauptmann. On May 10, 1933, a huge bonfire was kindled in Berlin<sup>①</sup> and the books of Marcel Proust, Andre Gide, Emilé Zola, Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and a hundred others were committed to the flames, amid shouts of idiot delight. By 1936, Joseph Paul Goebbels, Germany's Minister of Propaganda, was issuing a proclamation which began with the following words: "Because this year has not brought an improvement in art criticism, I forbid once and for all the continuance of art criticism in its past form, effective as of today." By 1936, there was no one left in Germany who had the brains or courage to object.

② Exactly why the Germans banished intelligence is a vast and largely unanswered question. I have never been persuaded that the desperate economic depression that **afflicted** Germany in the 1920s adequately explains what happened. To quote Aristotle: Men do not become tyrants in order to keep warm. Neither do they become stupid—at least that stupid. But the matter need not trouble us here. I offer the German case only as the most striking example of the fragility of human intelligence. My focus here is the United States in our own time, and I wish to worry you about the rapid erosion of our own intelligence. If you are confident that such a thing cannot happen, your confidence is misplaced, I believe, but it is understandable.

③ After all, the United States is one of the few countries in the world founded by intellectuals—men of wide learning, of extraordinary rhetorical powers, of deep faith in reason. And although



we have had our moods of anti-intellectualism, few people have been more generous in support of intelligence and learning than Americans. It was the United States that initiated the experiment in mass education that is, even today, the envy of the world. It was America's churches that laid the foundation of our admirable system of higher education; it was the Land-Grant Act of 1862<sup>2</sup> that made possible our great state universities; and it is to America that scholars and writers have fled when freedom of the intellect became impossible in their own nations. This is why the great historian of American civilization Henry Steele Commager<sup>3</sup> called America "the Empire of Reason". But Commager was referring to the United States of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. What term he would use for America today, I cannot say. Yet he has observed, as others have, a change, a **precipitous** decline in our valuation of intelligence, in our uses of language, in the disciplines of logic and reason, in our capacity to attend to complexity. Perhaps he would agree with me that the Empire of Reason is, in fact, gone, and that the most apt term for America today is the Empire of **Shlock**.

**4** In any case, this is what I wish to call to your notice: the frightening displacement of serious, intelligent public discourse in American culture by the imagery and **triviality** of what may be called show business. I do not see the decline of intelligent discourse in America leading to the barbarisms that flourished in Germany, of course. No scholars, I believe, will ever need to flee America. There will be no bonfires to burn books. And I cannot imagine any proclamations forbidding once and for all art criticism, or any other kind of criticism. But this is not a cause for complacency, let alone celebration. A culture does not have to force scholars to flee to render them impotent. A culture does not have to burn books to assure that they will not be read. And a culture does not need a Minister of Propaganda issuing proclamations to silence criticism. There are other ways to achieve stupidity, and it appears that, as in so many other things, there is a distinctly American way.

**5** To explain what I am getting at, I find it helpful to refer to two films, which taken together embody the main lines of my argument. The first film is of recent **vintage** and is called *The Gods Must Be Crazy*<sup>4</sup>. It is about a tribal people who live in the Kalahari Desert plains of southern Africa, and what happens to their culture when it is invaded by an empty Coca-Cola bottle tossed from the window of a small plane passing overhead. The bottle lands in the middle of the village and is construed by these gentle people to be a gift from the gods, for they not only have never seen a bottle before but have never seen glass either. The people are almost immediately charmed by the gift, and not only because of its novelty. The bottle, it turns out, has multiple uses, chief among them the intriguing music it makes when one blows into it.

**6** But gradually a change takes place in the tribe. The bottle becomes an irresistible preoccupation. Looking at it, holding it, thinking of things to do with it displace other activities once thought essential. But more than this, the Coke bottle is the only thing these people have ever seen of which there is only one of its kind. And so those who do not have it try to get it





from the one who does. And the one who does refuse to give it up. Jealousy, greed, and even violence enter the scene, and come very close to destroying the harmony that has characterized their culture for a thousand years. The people begin to love their bottle more than they love themselves, and are saved only when the leader of the tribe, convinced that the gods must be crazy, returns the bottle to the gods by throwing it off the top of a mountain.

7 The film is great fun and it is also wise, mainly because it is about a subject as relevant to people in Chicago or Los Angeles or New York as it is to those of the Kalahari Desert. It raises two questions of extreme importance to our situation: How does a culture change when new technologies are introduced to it? And is it always desirable for a culture to accommodate itself to the demands of new technologies? The leader of the Kalahari tribe is forced to confront these questions in a way that Americans have refused to do. And because his vision is not obstructed by a belief in what Americans call the “technological progress”, he is able with minimal discomfort to decide that the songs of the Coke bottle are not so alluring that they are worth admitting envy, egotism, and greed to a serene culture.

8 The second film relevant to my argument was made in 1967. It is Mel Brooks's first film, *The Producers*<sup>⑤</sup>. This film is a rather **raucous** comedy that has at its center a painful joke: An **unscrupulous** theatrical producer has figured out that it is relatively easy to **turn a buck** by producing a play that fails. All one has to do is induce dozens of backers to invest in the play by promising them **exorbitant** percentage of its profits. When the play fails, there being no profits to disperse, the producer walks away with thousands of dollars that can never be claimed. Of course, the central problem he must solve is to make sure that his play is a disastrous failure. And so he hits upon an excellent idea: he will take the most tragic and **grotesque** story of our century—the rise of Adolf Hitler—and make it into a musical.

9 Because the producer is only a crook and not a fool, he assumes that the stupidity of making a musical on this theme will be immediately grasped by audiences and that they will leave the theater in **dumbfounded** rage. So he calls his play *Springtime for Hitler*, which is also the name of its most important song. The melody of the song is catchy, and when the song is sung it is accompanied by a happy chorus line.

10 The ending of the movie is predictable. The audience loves the play and leaves the theater humming *Springtime for Hitler*. The musical becomes a great hit. The producer ends up in jail, his joke having turned back on him. But Brooks's point is that the joke is on us. Although the film was made years before a movie actor became President of the United States, Brooks was making a kind of prophecy about that—namely, that the producers of American culture will increasingly turn our history, politics, religion, commerce, and education into forms of entertainment, and that we will become as a result a trivial people, incapable of coping with complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty, perhaps even reality. We will become, in a phrase, a people amused into stupidity.

11 For those readers who are not inclined to take Mel Brooks as seriously as I do, let me





remind you that the prophecy I attribute here to Brooks was, in fact, made many years before by a more **formidable** social critic than he. I refer to Aldous Huxley, who wrote *Brave New World* <sup>⑥</sup> at the time that modern monuments to intellectual stupidity were taking shape: Nazism in Germany, fascism in Italy. But Huxley was not concerned in his book with such naked and crude forms of intellectual suicide. He saw beyond them, and mostly, I must add, he saw America. To be more specific, he foresaw that the greatest threat to the intelligence and humane creativity of our culture would not come from Big Brother and Ministries of Propaganda, or **gulags** and concentration camps. He prophesied, if I may put it this way, that there is tyranny lurking in a Coca-Cola bottle; that we could be ruined not by what we fear and hate but by what we welcome and love, by what we construe to be a gift from the gods.

**12** And in case anyone missed his point in 1932, Huxley wrote *Brave New World Revisited* years later. By then, George Orwell's *1984* had been published, and it was inevitable that Huxley would compare Orwell's book with his own. The difference, he said, is that in Orwell's book people are controlled by **inflicting** pain. In *Brave New World*, they are controlled by inflicting pleasure.

**13** The Coke bottle that has fallen in our midst is a corporation of dazzling technologies whose forms turn all serious public business into a kind of *Springtime for Hitler* musical. Television is the principal instrument of this disaster, in part because it is the medium Americans most dearly love, and in part because it has become the command center of our culture. Americans turn to television not only for their light entertainment but for their news, their weather, their politics, their religion, their history—all of which may be said to be their serious entertainment. The light entertainment is not the problem. The least dangerous things on television are its junk. What I am talking about is television's **preemption** of our culture's most serious business. It would be merely **banal** to say that television presents us with entertaining subject matter. It is quite another thing to say that on television all subject matter is presented as entertaining. And that is how television brings ruin to any intelligent understanding of public affairs.

**14** Even our daily news, which for most Americans means television news, is packaged as a kind of show, featuring handsome news readers, exciting music, and dynamic film footage. When there is no film footage, there is no story. Please understand that I am making no criticism of the visual arts in general.

**15** Neither do I make a complaint against entertainment. As an old song has it, life is not a highway **strewn** with flowers. The sight of a few blossoms here and there may make our journey a trifle more durable. But in America, the least amusing people are our professional entertainers. In our present situation, our preachers, entrepreneurs, politicians, teachers, and journalists are committed to entertaining us through media that do not lend themselves to serious, complex discourse. But these producers of our culture are not to be blamed. They, like the rest of us, believe in the supremacy of technological progress. It has never occurred to us that gods might be crazy. And even if it did, there is no mountaintop from which we can return what is dangerous to us.





**16** We would do well to keep in mind that there are two ways in which the spirit of a culture may be degraded. In the first—the Orwellian—culture becomes a prison. This was the way of the Nazis. In the second—the Huxleyan—culture becomes a **burlesque**. This appears to be the way of the Americans. What Huxley teaches is that in the Age of Advanced Technology, spiritual devastation is more likely to come from an enemy with smiling countenance than from one whose face **exudes** suspicion and hate. In the Huxleyan prophecy, Big Brother does not watch us, by his choice; we watch him, by ours. When a culture becomes distracted by **trivia**; when political and social life are redefined as a perpetual round of entertainments; when a people become, in short, an audience and their public business a **vaudeville** act, then—Huxley argued—a nation finds itself at risk and culture-death is a clear possibility. I agree.

### Notes:

- ① On the night of May 10, 1933, an event unseen in Europe since the Middle Ages occurred as German students from universities once regarded as among the finest in the world, gathered in Berlin to burn books with “unGerman” ideas. The students tossed heaps of books into a bonfire while giving the Hitler arm-salute and singing Nazi anthems. Among the 20,000 volumes hurled into the flames were the writings of Franz Boas, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Ernest Hemingway, Helen Keller, Jack London, Thomas Mann, Karl Marx, Hugo Preuss, Marcel Proust, Upton Sinclair, H.G. Wells, Theodor Wolff, Emile Zola, Arnold Zweig, Stefan Zweig and so on.
- ② **The Land-Grant College Act of 1862**, introduced by Justin Smith Morrill of Vermont, provided funding for institutions of higher learning in each state. Each state received 30,000 acres of federal land for each congressional representative from that state to be sold to provide an endowment for ...at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts.
- ③ **Henry Steele Commager** (1902~1998) was an American historian who helped define Modern liberalism in the United States for two generations through his 40 books and 700 essays and reviews. In his intellectual history *Empire of Reason: How Europe Imagined and America Realized the Enlightenment*, Commager investigates into the nation's European origins, illuminating how the new country embodied the principles of the Enlightenment. For him, the United States has realized the Enlightenment ideal and become “the empire of reason”.
- ④ ***The Gods Must Be Crazy*** is a 1980 South African comedy film written and directed by Jamie Uys. It is the most commercially successful release in the history of South Africa's film industry. Set in Botswana, it follows the story of Xi. Xi and his San tribe are “living well off the land” in